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Exploration and Discovery.

THE NEWLY-DISCOVERED LATIN TRANSLATION OF THE EPISTLE OF CLEMENT.

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The well-known first epistle of Clement has hitherto been supposed to exist only in two Greek manuscripts, the better of which was discovered and published by Bryennios of Nicomedia nineteen years ago, and in a Syriac version published by Lightfoot in 1877. Now, however, comes the surprising intelligence that, in the "Seminarbibliothek" at Namur, there has been discovered a Latin translation of the epistle. As no such translation is ever mentioned in old church literature, the discovery was entirely unexpected.

The translation dates from the second century, and carries us nearer to the original than any of the manuscripts above mentioned. The evidences of its age are: (1) It is not combined with the later pseudograph, the so-called second epistle of Clement; all the above manuscripts are so combined. This combination was made before the time of Eusebius. The Latin version, therefore, agrees with the testimony of the fathers before the time of Origen, none of whom know any second epistle of Clement. (2) The Latin it offers is substantially that of the Itala. (3) The translation shows no knowledge of the church terminology which was current later; for example, *πρεσβύτεροι* is regularly translated "*seniores*." (4) The translation rests upon a remarkably pure original. Harnack remarks, "On the basis of the (above) four witnesses, the text of this oldest writing of the Roman church can be more reliably reconstructed than that of any archaic Christian memorial, with the exception of a few Pauline epistles."

One of the most interesting peculiarities of the new-found translation is a modification of the original to suit the later spirit of the Roman church. It must be borne in mind that the author of the epistle was, in the opinion of the church of the middle ages, the pupil of Peter and his successor as Pope of the early church. The passage in the Greek original, where the good Clement prays that all believers may subject themselves in humility to the powers of the civil government, has been so altered in the translation that it states precisely

the opposite; that is, Clement now prays that all princes and rulers may now subject themselves to the church. Of course, the second-century translator could not have made this change as such ideas were at that time entirely unknown. But in the ninth or tenth century during the transmission of the document, at a time when the supremacy of the papacy was asserted, some one took the liberty of supposing that Clement never could have offered any such prayer, and the suitable alteration was made.

The discovered manuscript is a copy of the eleventh century, and was discovered by Herr Morin, Presb. et Monach. Ord. S. Benedicti at Maredsous.